

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

transition: word or phrase that links ideas and shows how they relate

pattern of organization: a particular arrangement of ideas and information; serves as a basic skeleton or structure for a paragraph. Patterns of organization include: *comparison-contrast, cause-and-effect, problem-solution, order of degree, chronological order, sequence order, and spatial order.*

HERE'S HOW

Step 1: Relate ideas. Select the transition that best expresses the relationship between ideas in your writing. You can use certain transitions to relate details in time, space, or importance. Other transitions might show comparison and contrast, cause and effect, or other logical relationships, such as problem and solution.

EXAMPLES

The cow stood in the middle of the road. Next to it was a calf. (*spatial order transition*)

Terrance tried out for the school play first. Next up was Keisha. (*sequence order transition*)

Step 2: Reinforce a pattern of organization. Using a family of transitions that reinforces your chosen pattern of organization will keep readers on track to follow one line of thought.

Step 3: Revise for clarity, variety, and interest. As you revise, create ease for the reader. Eliminate transitions that get in the way. Add transitions where writing seems choppy or confusing. Be sure to vary your transitions for reader interest. Note that some paragraphs include more than one pattern of organization, such as sequence and cause-effect order, spatial and sequence order, and so on.

EXAMPLES

comparison and contrast: Cassie and Jim were *both* good athletes. *Like* Cassie, Jim was fast. *Similarly*, they both could jump very high. *However*, they didn't like the same sports. Cassie loved soccer, *but* Jim loved track and field.

sequence order and cause-effect: *Because* Clyde won the state spelling bee, his picture was in the paper. *As a result* of the picture, several things happened. *First*, kids he didn't know said "Hi" to him at school. *Next*, he was asked to sit at the popular table at lunch. *Finally*, Clara asked him to the fall dance.